

Andrew Jackson to Willie Blount, December 27, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO WILLIE BLOUNT.

Fort Strother, December 26, 1813. "at night 10 oclock."

D'r Sir: I am wearied with dating letters at this place, every exertion that was within my power has been made, to progress with the campaign and save the state from disgrace. Still insurmountable difficulties present themselves, and it appears, that I am to be left alone struggling to obtain the object. I have advised you, of the failure of General cocke to bring into the field, the fifteen hundred men agreeable to the requisition of the secratary of war that was so anxiously sought for by him to fill from his Division. I have transmitted you his letters promising supplies of breadstuffs, which was never forwarded, I have advised you of my order to him to return and pass by the way of Fort armstrong¹ and there make arrangements, for transporting, from thence to this place a sufficient supply of bread stuff, and to go from there to Rosses, and see that the contractor had a sufficient supply there, and direct his quarter master to have it immediately transported to Fort armstrong, and in case there was not sufficient supplies delivered at Rosses by the contractor agreeable to his requisition forthwith to order the quarter master to purchase at any price to fill the requisition. The inclosed letters from Colo. Snodgrass will shew you how far the regulations of the general has afforded supplies here. The finishing of the Fort in the heart of the Cherokee nation, appears to be a primary object instead of supplies for this army. I have inclosed you heretofore his order to Genl white, that occasioned the general to retrograde and not form a Junction with me and which occasioned my retrograde from Talladega; after the battle *that* has proved fatal to my arrangements. I inclose you a note I sent to Colo Lillard of this day with his answer which will shew you with what intentions

Library of Congress

and expectations the Junction was formed with me, by the east Tennessee troops. Was it not for the declarations of Colo Lillard personally, added to the expressions of his Regt, I could not believe, that the general would have made such a promise to men whose service was so much needed as the one contained in Colo Lillards note, without notifying me thereof. I inclose them however for your perusal, and a further evidence of the boasted patriotism of the State, when danger approaches.

1 Fort Armstrong was on the Coosa, 80 miles above Fort Strother.

I have Just recd a letter from Colo Carroll, from Huntsville advising me that he has about six hundred mounted men, whose officers say they have volunteered their service for sixty days, I have no authority to accept of the service of men for so short a term nor do I know of any law that would authorise it. I gave Colo. Carroll orders to raise on my own responsibility one thousand footmen for six months or during the campaign. I have wrote to Colo Carrol, if they will on the responsibility, of the goverment for payment, without any responsibility on me, come on and serve sixty days to bring them on, but explain to them, that 29 they are not in the field by my orders or on my responsibility. I am ordered by Genl Pinckney to advance and fortify and retain the ground I take possession of, men for sixty days service answers but little purpose in such a campaign as contemplated by the goverment.

the Goverment intends to conqur the Creek nation and hold possession of it. The President has predicated his orders to Genl Pinckney on the reliance that the state of Tennessee has 5000 troops in the field, when in fact she has not one thousand that she can calculate on. I cannot think it Possible that you will hesitate under existing circumstances, to order a draft to fill up the Deficiency, occasiond by the ommission of General Cocke, and the Desertion of the volunteers. When we view the conduct of Govr Meigs, and Shelby,² to aid Harrison with men, and how gratefull the general Goverment has been to them for their patriotism, will it be sufferred to be said and recorded in history, that the Governor of Tennessee will permit a campaign so prosperously begun, defeated

Library of Congress

and with it the reputation of the state for Patriotism damd forever, for the want of his exertions, and the fear of taking a little responsibility on himself. I cannot, I will not believe it.

2 Return J. Meigs, the younger, governor of Ohio, and Isaac Shelby, governor of Tennessee.

is the freemen of the state so lost to every feeling of true americans, lost to every feeling of the soldier and the patriot to shrink from the contest, with a savage tribe that has murdered our *fathers* our *wives* and our *sleeping babes* . If this is the case, which I fear it is, then Sir your powers is looked up to cure the evil, and to save the state and the citizens (who are devoid of noble feelings) from eternal disgrace, by immediately ordering a draft under the requisition of the late law of the state, and the requisition of the Secretary of war. I say under the law of the state, for inasmuch as the campaign is not finished contemplated by that act, and as the number of thirty five hundred men is not in the field, it is your duty to require, not only to have the requisition of the secretary of war, but the requisition of the law of the state filled, and the campaign carried on with that vigor contemplated by the late law.

here sir, permit me to be plain, is a greater responsibility upon you, in not ordering, than to order, here is a positive law that requires you to act untill the thing contemplated by the law is completly carried into effect, and particularly so as the general goverment has sanctioned the act of the state and believes and has a right so to do, that five thousand men are in the field for the campaign or for six months. The men having been once in the field and having retrograded, does not do away your powers under the law, or your obligations to the state and the general govment, in having the campaign continued to the full extent now contemplated by the general goverment.

Where does the Governor of Georgia obtain his powers from. the same as yours, from a requisition of the secretary of war for fifteen hundred men and a law of the state. The

Library of Congress

time of the first class have expired. the Governor of Georgia has ordered a draft, as I am informed by Mr Cooper, express from Genl Pinckney and are now marching thirty five hundred men up to relieve those that have served six months under Genl Floyd. and will it be permitted to be said that the governor of the (once) patriotic state of Tennessee, at such an important crisis as the present, when the creeks are more than half conquered, a British force on the coast ready to aid and supply them, and reanimate their sinking spirits, I repeat will it be permitted to be recorded in the page of history that the governor of Tennessee hesitated one moment on the subject of exercising his power to carry into effect the grand object of the state and the general Government in bringing the campaign to a speedy and happy conclusion by ordering a draft for such number of men as will fill the deficiency of the quota of this state, and now absent from the service. *I hope not* . delay will not do, the campaign must not be delayed. every exertion must be made to put down the creeks and meet the British at the walls of Pensacola. There is the Point to put a speedy end to the war, and I hope your exertions will not be wanting, to enable me agreeable to Genl Pinckneys orders, there to meet the eternal enemies of our peace put an end to the war, and give peace to our southern and western frontiers.

These sentiments grow out of your letter to Colo. Carrol which this evening reached me from Colo. Carrol, in which you say you have no power to order men out, and I have given you mine with the frankness of a friend, in the present disagreeable situation of our country. I believe you have the power. I believe every patriot, will Justify your exercising of it, and the publick good requires you should promptly exercise it. I wish you to give me a speedy answer that I may know my true situation and advise Genl Pinckney what he may rely on. Genl Pinckney having requested that I should name some fit person to act as asst. D. q master for East Tennessee, I have named Mr Baxter, who sets out tomorrow morning to take a peep into the causes why I have got no supplies from East Tennessee of bread stuff with the necessary instructions to purchase. I will try if I cannot punish McGees pockett for his conduct. let me hear from you by [the next] express, my situation is a critical one, and the frontier of your state will be in an equal critical situation, if I am compelled

Library of Congress

to retrograde, with a British army to supply and aid the creeks. a posponement will not do, it will have the same evils of a retrograde and attended with equal expence to the goverment, the expence is more than half incurred, if you will from the whole state give me Twenty five hundred men, I will hazard with my life and reputation a full completion of the campaign with that number if spedily furnished and supplied.

I am sir respectfully, yr mo. ob. serv.